

**6.0**

# **CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

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This section analyzes the cumulative effects (positive and negative) of the Proposed Action (Alternative 2) in the context of other Federal or non-Federal past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and California. NEPA defines cumulative effects as “the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the Action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions (40 FR 1508.7). For the purposes of this discussion, the terms “effects” and “impacts” are considered to be synonymous with consequences. Cumulative impacts result from federal or non-federal past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions that, when considered in isolation, have less than significant adverse environmental impacts, but collectively can have significant impacts over time, on the same resource.

The cumulative impacts analysis will cover the analysis area described in Figure 2 and will also examine any actions outside the analysis area that are reasonably likely to affect the resources it contains.

If an action is determined to have no direct or indirect negative impact on an element of the environment then it can have no cumulative impact on that environmental element. As described in Section 5, the No Action Alternative was determined to have no direct or indirect effects on the environment and, therefore, its cumulative impact would be equivalent to a continuation of current environmental trends and conditions. Alternatively, the cumulative impact of the No Action may have minor beneficial effects because of ongoing state, local government, and private activities aimed at benefitting elements of the Affected Environment such as water quality conditions and fish habitat. State, local, and private planning efforts include watershed planning, environmental land use zoning, shoreline protection, and habitat conservation plans.

Implementation of the Limit 10 criteria as a management option under the Proposed Action was determined to have no direct or indirect negative impacts on land use, geology, physiography, soils, climate, air quality, water quantity, vegetation, salmonid or non-salmonid fish, wildlife, demographic trends, economy, recreation, cultural resources, tribal treaty rights, or environmental justice issues, but it could have some beneficial impacts. The Proposed Action offers the opportunity to pursue routine road maintenance activities to avoid possible liability under the ESA and providing NMFS with an additional management tool for conserving listed species. Thus, its cumulative effect would be to add to the ongoing and planned state, local, and private integrated planning efforts that may directly or indirectly benefit these resources.

Alternative 3 was determined to have no direct or indirect negative impacts on land use, geology, physiography, soils, climate, air quality, water quantity, vegetation, salmonid or non-salmonid fish and wildlife, demographic trends, economy, recreation, cultural resources, tribal treaty rights, or environmental justice issues, but it could have some beneficial impacts. The environmental impacts associated with Alternative 3 were determined to be similar to the

1 environmental impacts of both Alternative 2 and Alternative 1. Therefore, its cumulative effect  
2 would be to add to or be equal to the state, local, and private integrated planning efforts that may  
3 directly or indirectly benefit these resources.  
4

5 Activities under all three alternatives represent an overall positive influence on the 14 listed  
6 ESUs (Table 16). Alternatives 2 and Alternative 3 were determined to have incremental  
7 beneficial effects compared to the No Action Alternative (there may be short term impacts) at  
8 the reach level on soils, water quantity, water quality, vegetation, the 14 listed salmonid ESUs,  
9 and some wildlife species. Overall, activities under the Proposed Action would augment past,  
10 present, and foreseeable planning efforts within the geographic range of the 14 ESUs and add a  
11 conservation tool for protecting these salmon and steelhead populations.